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UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

Office of the Executive Secretary


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25 October 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR HOLDERS OF "Evaluation of Offensive
Threat in Cuba" 

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21 October 1962  is downgraded to
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Executive Secretary

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EVALUATION OF OFFENSIVE THREAT IN CUBA



INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

21 October 1962



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OFFICE OF
THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE


21 October 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Members of the United States Intelligence Board

SUBJECT : Evaluation of Offensive Threat in Cuba

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Marshall S. Carter
Lieutenant General, USA
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

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EVALUATION OF OFFENSIVE THREAT IN CUBA

Significance

1. A significant deployment of guided missiles to Cuba is already well advanced, and has proceeded by first deploying a large force of defensive weapons, followed quickly by long-range offensive guided missiles and aircraft. (See Figure 1.) A mixed force of 1000- and 2200-nm ballistic missiles in Cuba provides for the first time a significant strategic strike capability against almost all targets in the U. S., and against a large portion of Canada and Latin America. (See Figure 2.) The planning for this operation must have started at least one year ago and the actual deployment itself began last spring.

Offensive Deployment

2. The equipment for 1000-nm ballistic missiles is now being deployed in Western Cuba at four launch sites near San Cristobal. (See Figures 3-5.) Two of these are now operational and the other two are proceeding to this status on an accelerated basis. The missiles are probably those reported moving into this area during September. Each of the four sites contains eight missiles and four unrevetted, field type launchers which rely on mobile erection, checkout, and support equipment. This implies a refire capability from each unit.

3. Other 1000-nm ballistic missiles are also deployed at two sites nine miles apart, east of Havana in the Sagua La Grande area. (See Figures 8-9.) These sites closely resemble the sites at San Cristobal but appear to be more permanent in nature. Terrain features have dictated considerable clearing and grading for deployment of the system. Also, there are permanent structures at the launch positions at each site and we estimate an operational capability for each site within one week. The sizes of the missiles, associated equipment, and buildings found at the San Cristobal and Sagua La Grande sites are almost identical and are compatible with the 1000-nm missile system.

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4. Two fixed sites for 2200-nm, ballistic missiles are under construction in the Guanajay area near Havana. (See Figures 6-7.) Four launchers, two blockhouses, and underground propellant storage are being built at each site. Site 1 is considered to be in a mid-to-late stage of construction and should be operational within six weeks. Site 2 is in an earlier stage of construction and could be operational between 15 and 30 December 1962. There are no missiles or support equipment detectable within the Guanajay Area at the present time.

5. An additional fixed site has been observed at Remedios in Eastern Cuba which is similar to those at Guanajay. This is probably a valid indicator of deployment of a second grouping of 2200-nm ballistic missiles.

6. In addition to missiles, IL-28 light bomber aircraft with a combat radius of about 750 miles are also arriving in Cuba. Approximately 22 of these bombers, [REDACTED] are now present. These are in addition to the force of about 40 MIG-21 fighters there.

Nuclear Warheads

7. We believe that a nuclear warhead storage site is under construction adjacent to the more complete of the fixed missile launch sites near Guanajay. (See Figure 6.) Construction is proceeding at a high rate. This site could become operational at about the same time as the associated Launch Site 1.

8. A curved-roof building similar to that at Guanajay Site 1, but only about 35 by 67 feet has been observed at the newly identified possible missile site near Remedios.

9. Foundations of structures (approximately 60 by 35 feet) which may be intended to be future nuclear warhead storage facilities have been observed at the San Cristobal Sites 1 and 3 and at Sagua La Grande Site 1. The appearance of concrete arches nearby indicates that these buildings will be earth-covered.

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10. Search of the major airfields in Cuba has not as yet revealed any structures that can be identified as intended for nuclear storage.

11. There is still no evidence of currently operational nuclear storage facilities in Cuba. Nevertheless, one must assume that nuclear weapons could now be in Cuba to support the operational missile capability as it becomes available. The missiles would probably be equipped with thermo-nuclear warheads.

Support and Supply

12. Offensive missile systems are being introduced into Cuba through the Port of Mariel and perhaps other ports. A new Soviet ship, the Poltava, possibly designed as a ballistic missile transport, has been noted making frequent trips between the USSR and Cuba. (See Figure 11.) This ship has made two trips to Cuba since 17 July, and is next estimated to arrive in Cuba on or about 2 November 1962.

13. Possible central missile checkout, storage, and repair bases have been located at Soroa, between the two eastern deployment areas, and at Managua, south of Havana.

14. It is significant that all of the ballistic and air defense missiles now being deployed in Cuba probably use a common oxidizer, permitting exploitation of a common system for propellant supply and storage.

Coastal Defense Missiles

15. Three coastal defense missile sites have now been identified in Cuba, two of which must now be considered operational (Banes and Santa Cruz del Norte). (See Figure 10.) These cruise missiles have a range of 35 to 40 miles.

Air Defense Missiles

16. There are now 24 primary surface-to-air missile sites located in Cuba. (See Figure 10.) Two of these sites, Santa Lucia and Deleite,

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each have an alternate site located 3 to 5 nm from the primary site. These alternate sites are pre-surveyed, have no equipment and could possibly be used for mobility training exercises. Of the 24 primary sites, 20 are individually operational at the present time. The remaining primary surface-to-air missile sites could be operational in approximately one week.

17. There are 6 surface-to-air missile assembly and support areas. Photography shows large quantities of surface-to-air missile cannisters and missile transporters.

Guided Missile Patrol Craft

18. There are now a total of 12 missile-launching patrol craft in Cuba. Each craft carries two homing missiles which have an effective range of 10 to 15 nm and carry 2000-pound, high-explosive warheads. They must return to base or to a tender for reloading, although tenders for these craft have not yet been identified in Cuba. All of these missile launching patrol craft in Cuba are considered to be operational. All have been recently observed operating in the Mariel area, but it is not known whether they are based there or were operating from other bases.

19. These craft have all been transported to Cuba as deck cargo on Soviet ships, two and four per shipload. The first shipment arrived in Havana on 14 August 1962. Whereas it probably took several weeks to establish base and logistic support for the first craft to become integrated fully operational units, additional units can probably become operational within one week after offloading.

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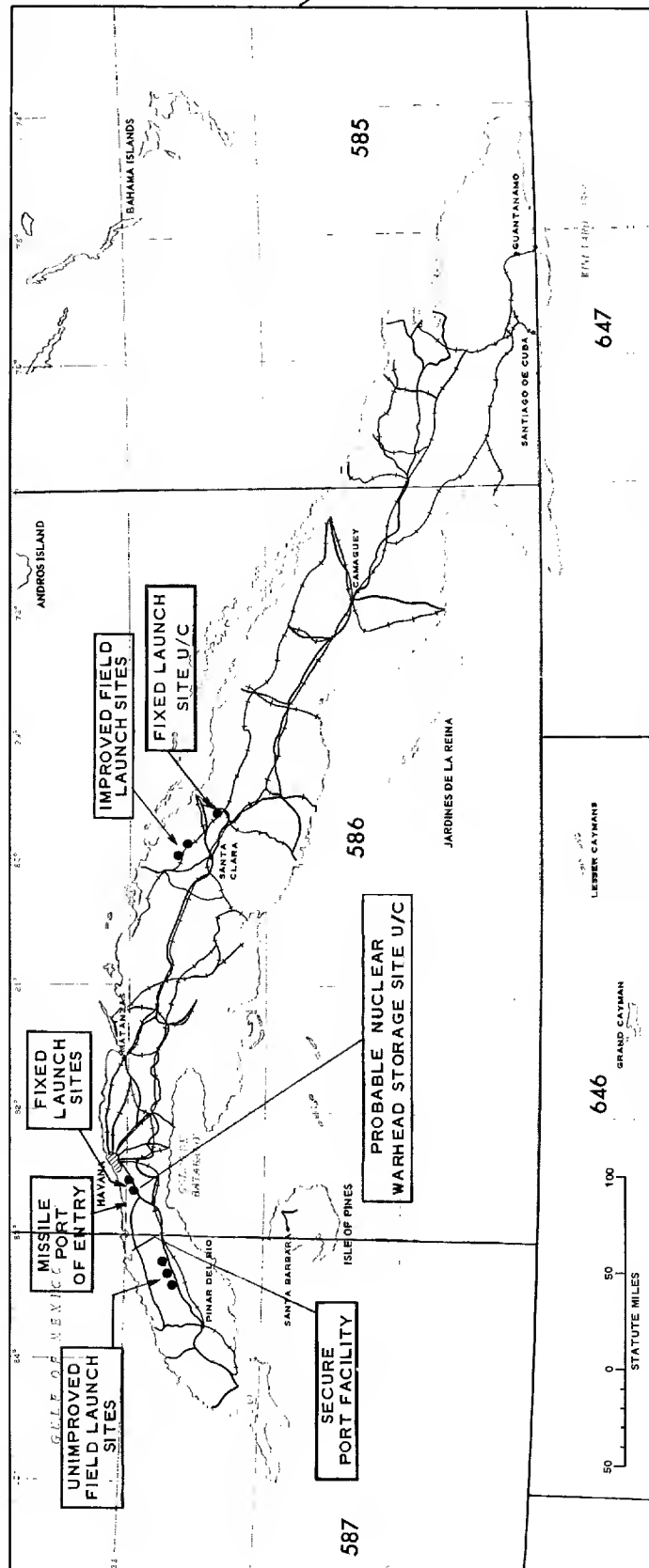


FIGURE 1. LOCATION OF OFFENSIVE MISSILE SITES AND PROBABLE NUCLEAR STORAGE IN CUBA.

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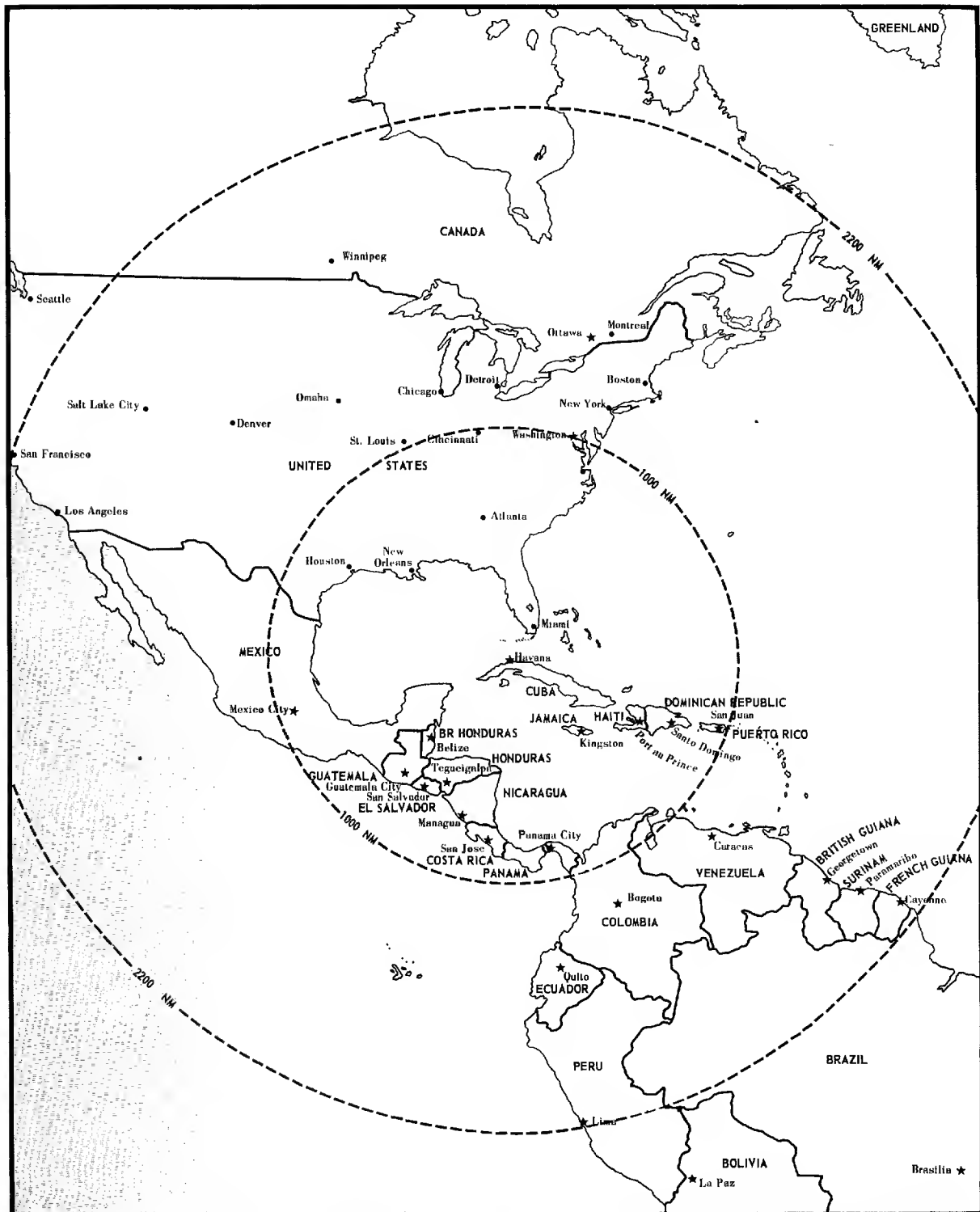


FIGURE 2. REPRESENTATIVE DISTANCES TO POINTS IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE FROM CUBA.

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FIGURE 3. UNIMPROVED FIELD LAUNCH SITE 1, SAN CRISTOBAL AREA.

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FIGURE 4. UNIMPROVED FIELD LAUNCH SITE 2, SAN CRISTOBAL AREA.

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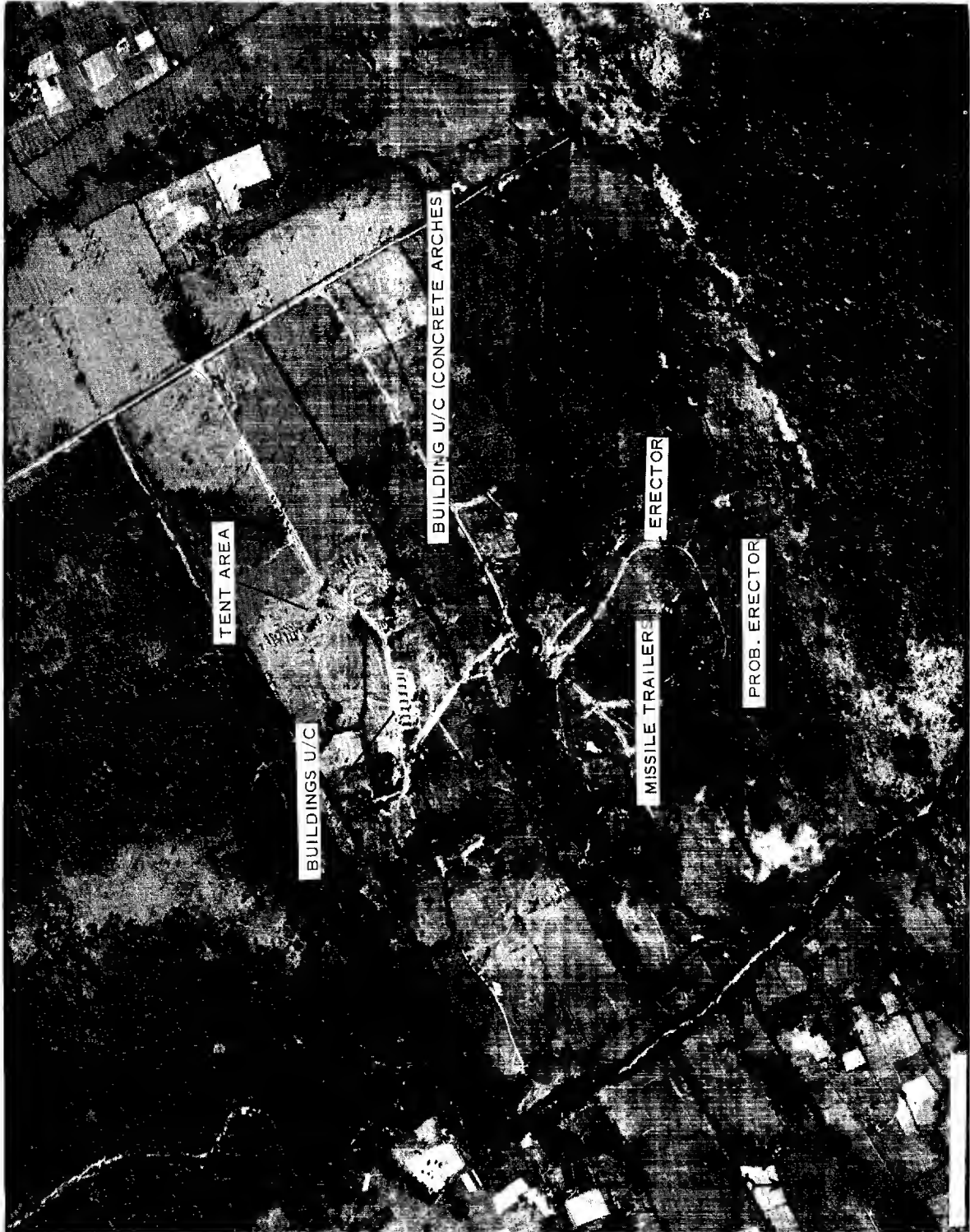


FIGURE 5. POSSIBLE UNIMPROVED FIELD LAUNCH SITE 3, SAN CRISTOBAL AREA.

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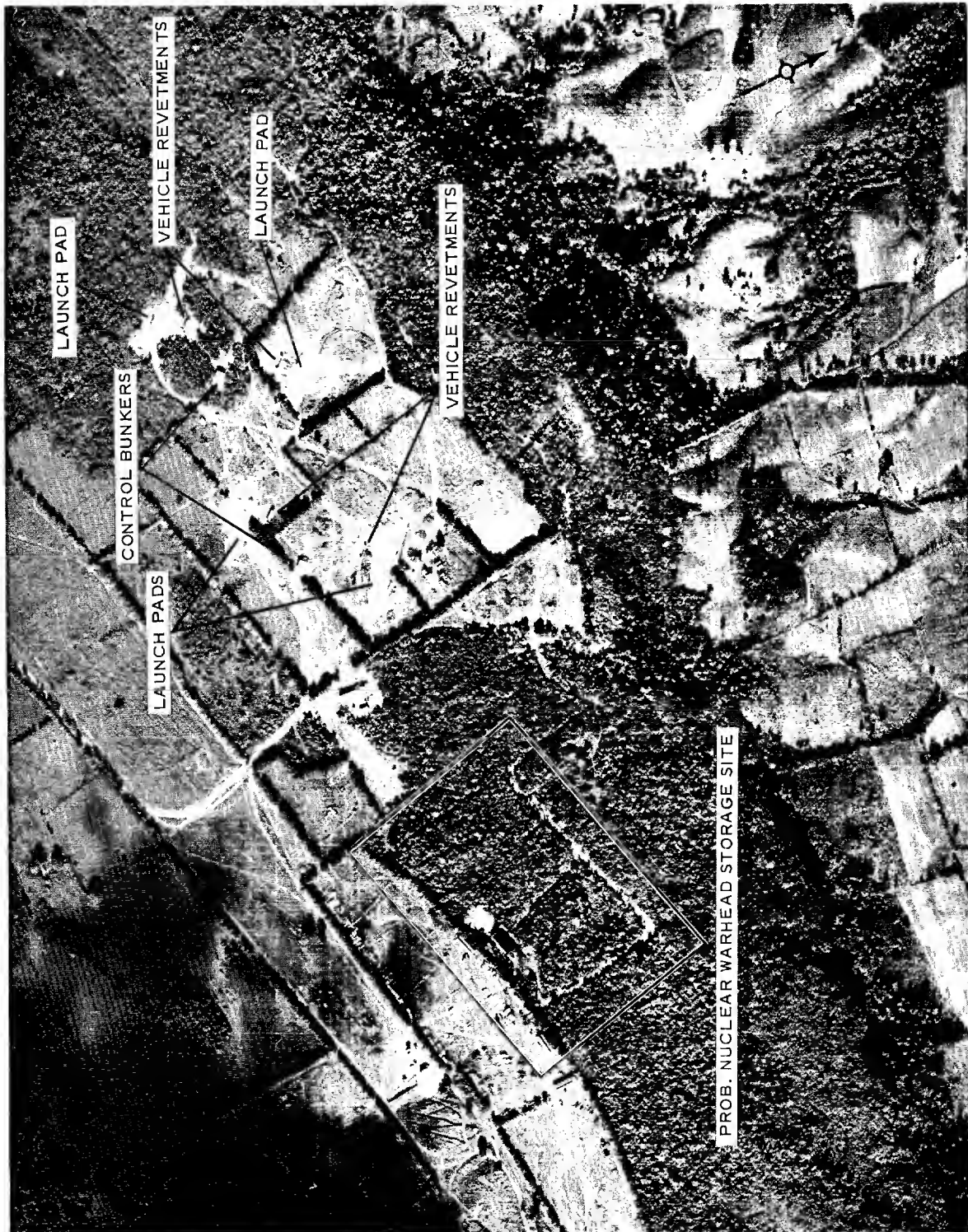


FIGURE 6. FIXED LAUNCH SITE 1, GUANAJAY AREA.

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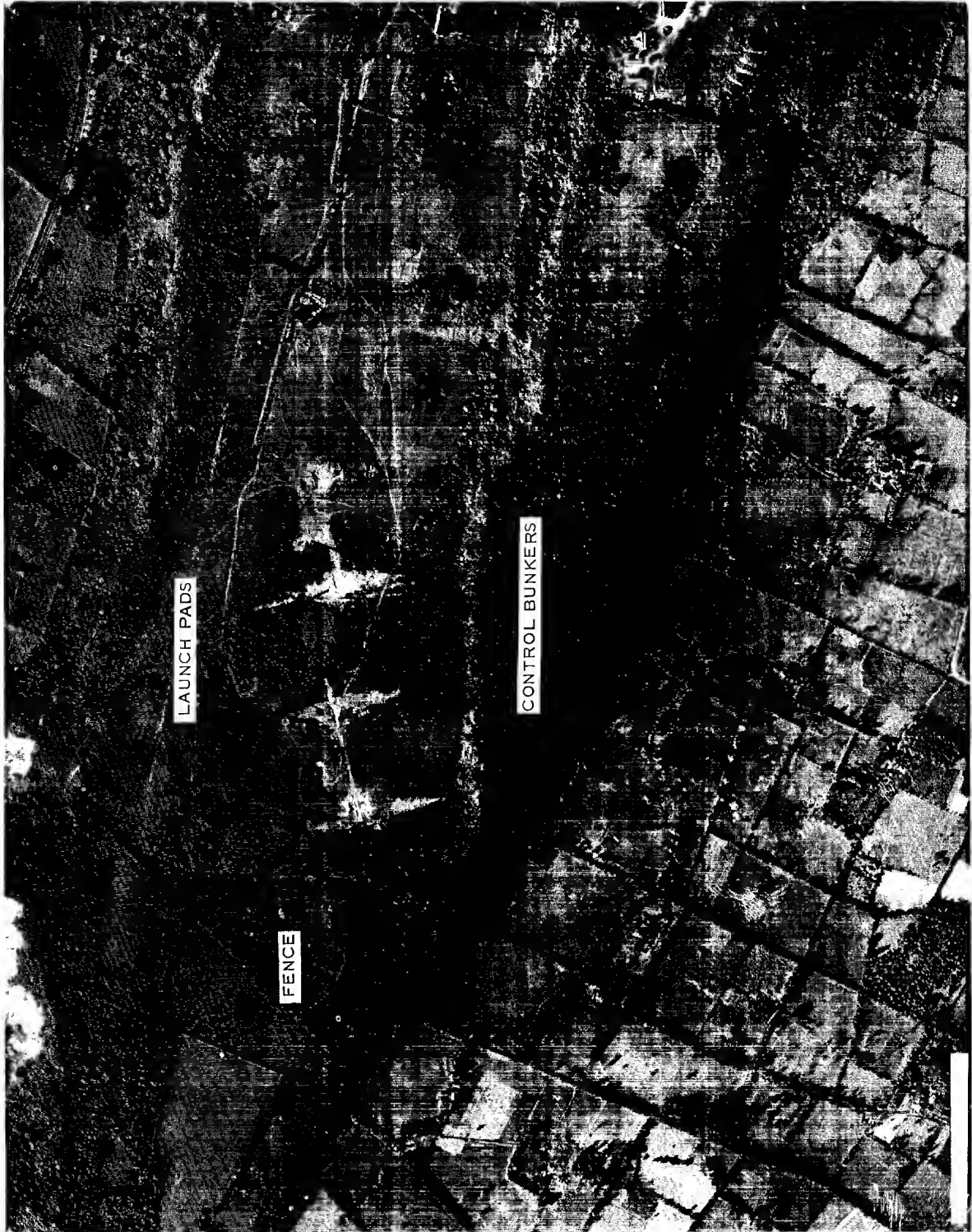


FIGURE 7. FIXED LAUNCH SITE 2, GUANAJAY AREA.

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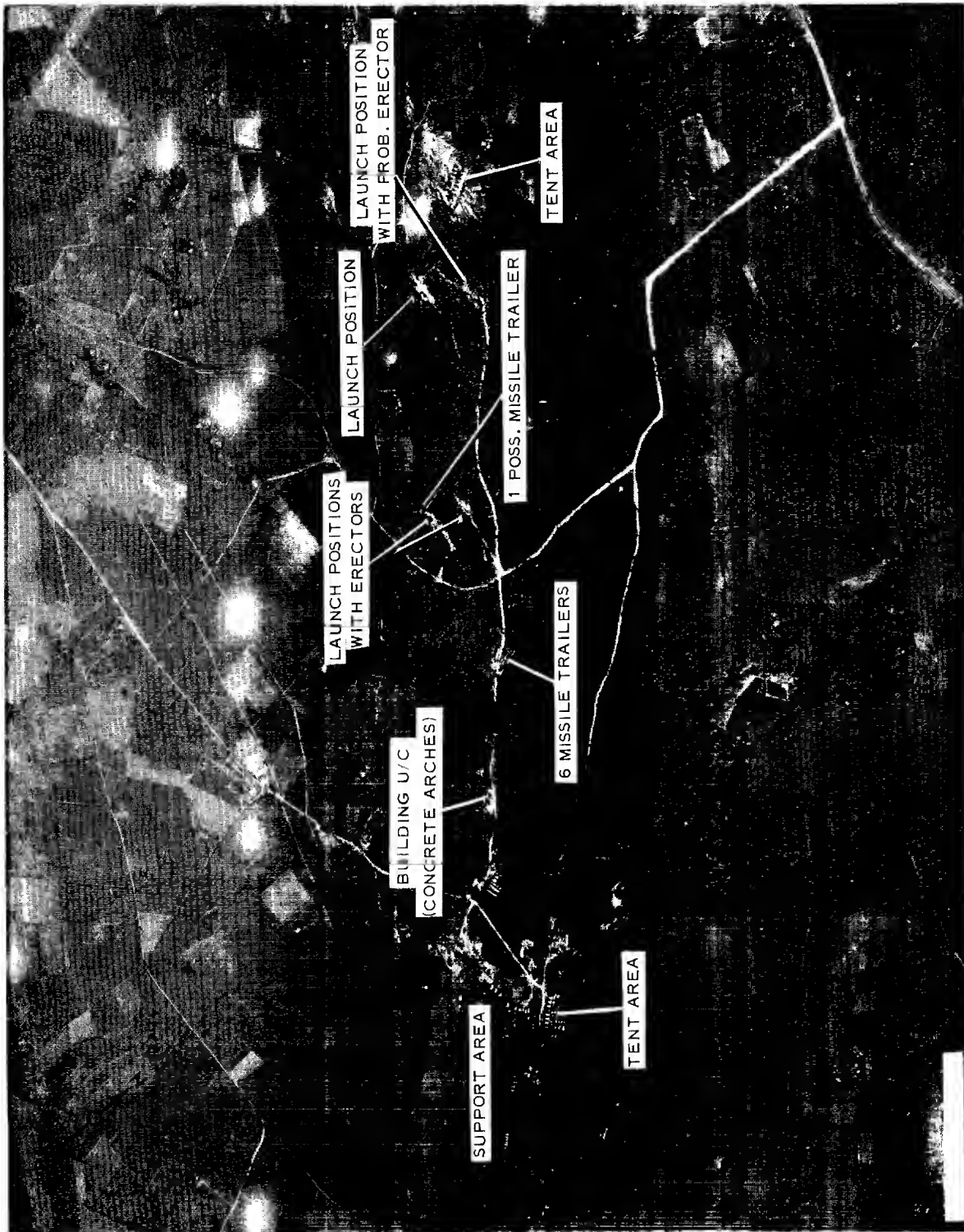


FIGURE 8. IMPROVED FIELD LAUNCH SITE 1, SAGUA LA GRANDE AREA.

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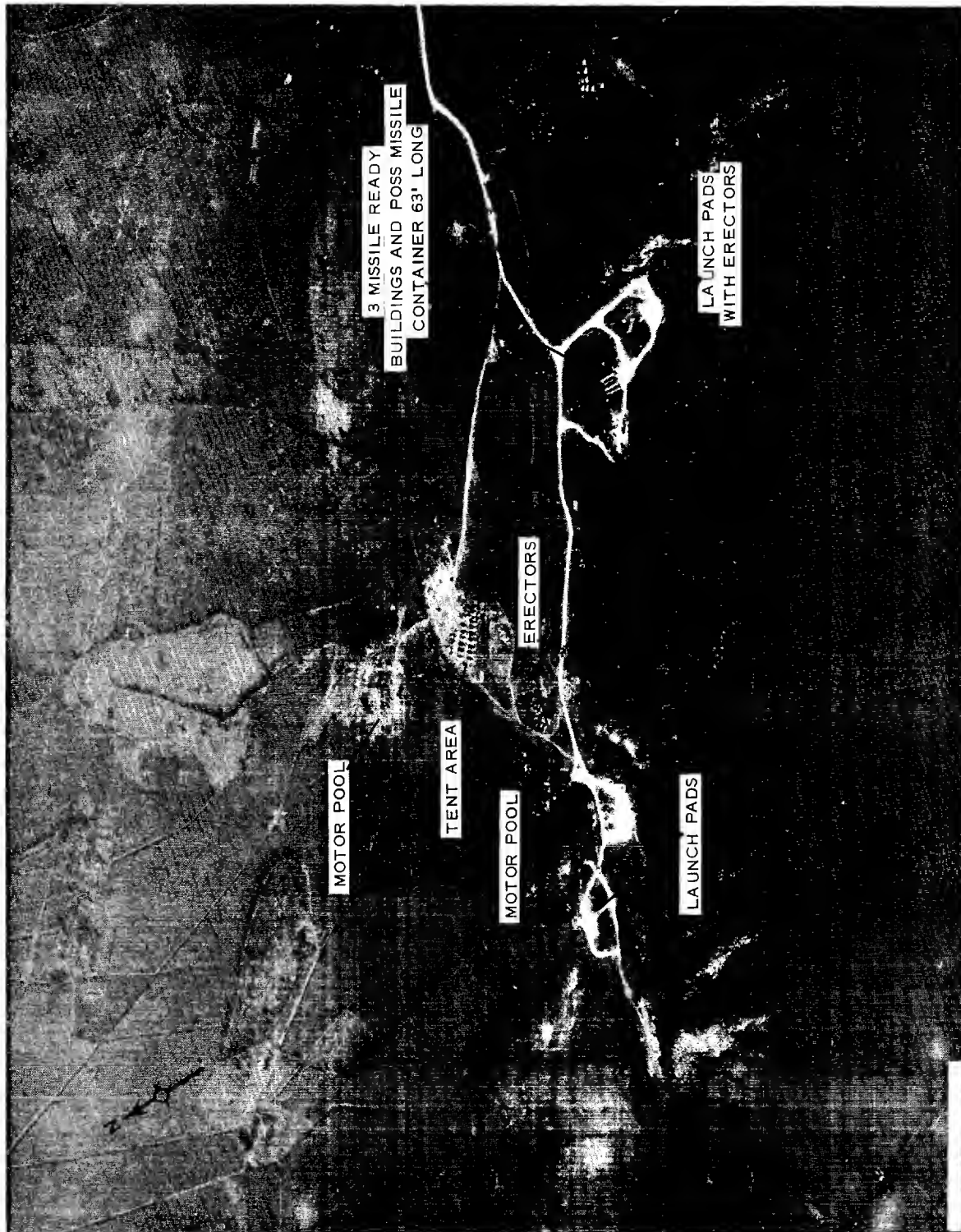


FIGURE 9. IMPROVED FIELD LAUNCH SITE 2, SAGUA LA GRANDE AREA.

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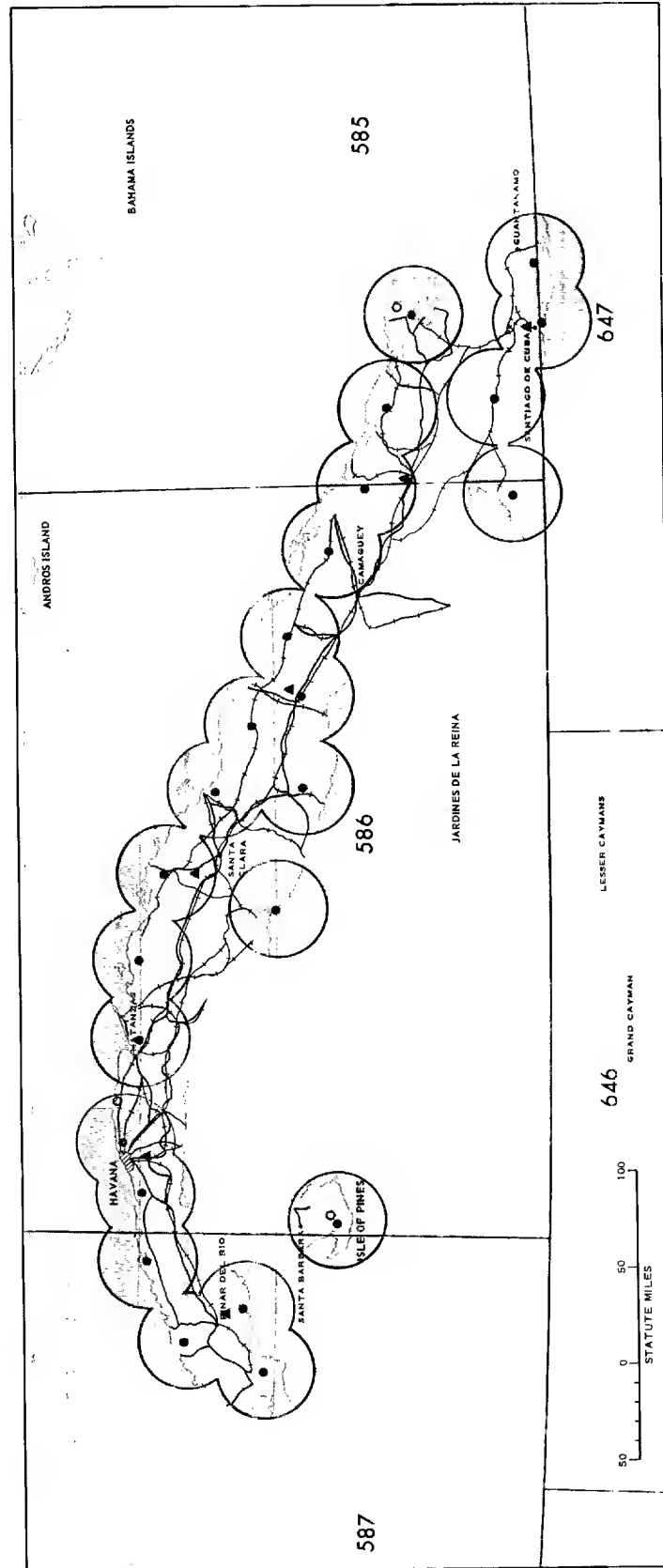


FIGURE 10. LOCATION OF DEFENSIVE MISSILE SITES IN CUBA.

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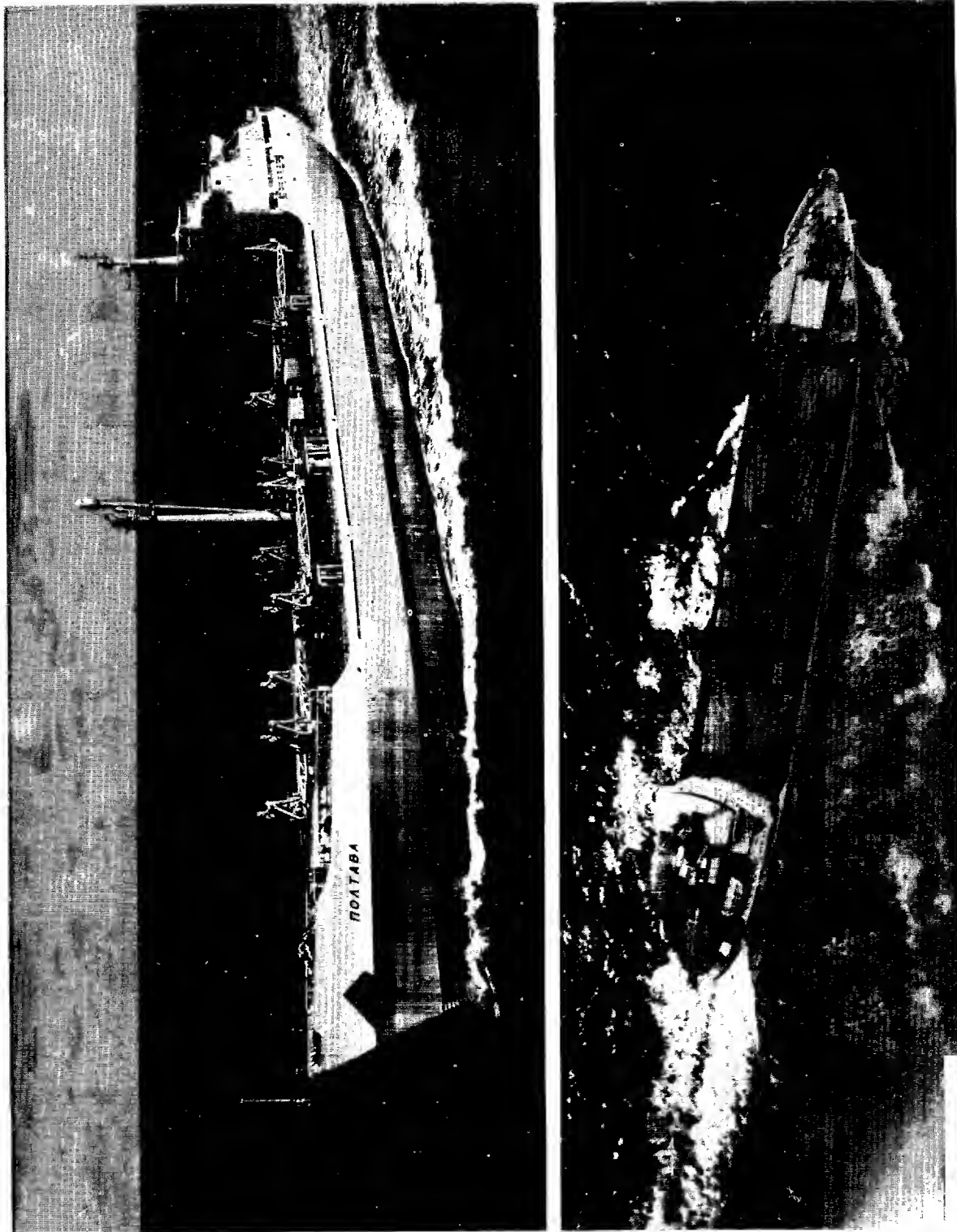


FIGURE 11. POLTAVA AS PHOTOGRAPHED ON 15 SEPTEMBER 1962.

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